

20th-Fox Heads For 28 Releases

By JAY L. SMITH



That's quite a write-up on Thomas F. O'Neil, RKO president, in the current issue of Newsweek. Article includes a four-page spread, plus a cover-photo of O'Neil, against a color still from the first production under the new RKO management, "The First Travelling Saleslady". Newsweek Associate Editor Sanford Brown, in his article, details the resurgence of activity at the new RKO, pointing out that "the comeback will reach a milestone next month when RKO stages the world premiere of 'The First Travelling Saleslady'".

Dore Schary, M-G-M studio head, at a recent meeting of key personnel at the studio, announced a severe and disciplined economy drive being put into effect immediately at the Culver City plant. Schary stated that making BIG pictures, just for bigness' sake, is unprofitable, and that in the future, M-G-M is going to be a lot more careful in the way production money is spent. Schary emphasized that M-G-M is still willing to put as much money as is necessary into any given film, "provided that money is controlled and seen on the screen". Schary also pointed out that over the past 18 months, the most profitable pictures from M-G-M, were those made on a reasonable budget.

A release from Eddie Bushnell, assistant general manager of the CBC, revealed last week that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is involved in the production of the TV film series, "Last of the Mohicans", which goes into production at Arthur Gottlieb's Canadian Film Industries studio next week. The news release advises that upon completion, "The Last of

(Continued on Page 2)

"King and I" Company's Biggest Grosser Since "Robe" In 1953

Toronto: Heading for a target of 28 releases this year as part of an amplified production-distribution program, 20th Century-Fox has announced a 3-month summer line-up of 5 major CinemaScope 55 and CinemaScope attractions, it was revealed last week by Pete Myers, Canadian District Manager.

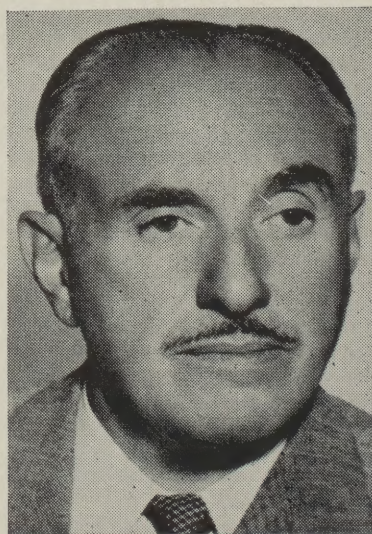
Calgary: A. W. Shackleford, of Lethbridge, president of the Alberta Theatre Association, and Douglas Miller, of Taber, vice-president, have commented on the resolution of Calgary's city council (See CENSORSHIP Page 4)

The slate, covering July, August and September, represents one of the company's strongest and most diversified arrays of films, led off by Rodgers & Hammerstein's "The King And I" in CinemaScope 55 which currently is off to a smash (See 20TH-FOX Page 4)

Jack Warner Hits Optimistic Note As New W-B President

New York: As reported in last week issue of The Digest, the group of investors headed by Serge Semenenko and including Charles Allen, Jr., has successfully completed negotiations of several months for the acquisition of a major portion of the stock held by Harry M. and Albert Warner in Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc.

Jack L. Warner, vice-president in charge of production for the motion picture company, has been (See WARNERS Page 4)



JACK L. WARNER

N.S. Theatres Get Slight Tax Relief

Halifax: A slight bit of welcome relief for Nova Scotia exhibitors was the reduction this week of the Provincial Amusement Tax. Some time ago a Brief was presented to the Nova Scotia Government, and last May a delegation composed of Messrs. Jim McDonough, Peter (See TAX CUT Page 4)

"Trapeze" Smashes World Gross Record

New York: Hecht and Lancaster's "Trapeze" has broken the all-time world's gross record in the first week of its general release, it was announced last week by William J. Heineman, UA Vice-President in charge of distribution.

In the first seven days of 405 bookings in the United States and Canada, "Trapeze" has grossed \$4,112,500, the greatest total ever registered in that period by any motion picture in the history of the industry.

(See "TRAPEZE" Page 4)

10 Top Features For Paramount Release July Through December

Toronto: Ten major Paramount films will enter release during the final six months of 1956, Gordon Lightstone, Canadian District Manager, announced last week. The schedule includes special engagements of Cecil B. DeMille's production of "The Ten Commandments" and Ponti-DeLaurentiis' "War and Peace."

Described by Lightstone as "the biggest box-office array of product ever to come from the company

(See PARAMOUNT Page 2)

CBU's 20,000 Members

Toronto: The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Projectionists and the Canadian Federation of Musicians are two of the participating groups (See CBU Page 2)

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On the Beam

(Continued from Page 1)

the Mohicans" will be telecast by the CBC and sold and distributed elsewhere in the world by Television Programs of America, Inc., under a distribution agreement between the CBC and Normandie Productions Ltd., on the one hand, and TPA on the other.

Alex Barris, popular movie columnist for the *Globe & Mail*, is doing right well by himself as emcee of his own TV program, "The Barris Beat", now in its third week on the CBC Television Network. Program comes on at 9.00 p.m., Wednesdays, and according to reports, telerating for the program is exceptionally good.

In last week's column we republished a letter from Charles Chaplin, Canadian District Manager for United Artists, in which he thanked Canadian exhibitors for their overwhelming support of UA Week. Unfortunately, a typographical error listed the number of Canadian theatres in which UA features were shown during the week of July 1-7 as 200, when of course the correct figure was a record-breaking 922. We did have the number of features correct at 1694.

There was quite a donnybrook at Joe Dyzak's Windsor Drive-In last week, when union pickets clashed with would-be patrons and theatre staff. Joe, who is operating the projection machines himself, is a licensed operator, but not a member of the union, which is picketing the theatre. It was a most unfortunate affair, which even more unfortunately hit the front pages of the daily newspapers, giving our industry a black eye it can well do without in these difficult times.

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Manitoba Picture Pioneers Hold Successful Golf Tournament

Winnipeg: Thirty golfers participated in the third annual golf tournament, sponsored by the Canadian Picture Pioneers, Manitoba Branch, held at the Glendale Golf and Country Club, Winnipeg, on Wednesday, July 11th. The tournament was followed by a steak dinner at the Club House, attended by 40 people.

The Ray Lewis Memorial Trophy, for team event, was won for the second time, by the projectionists team of Ray Reaney, Nate Wolk and Toby Triller. The winning team also received individual prizes of leather wallets, which were donated by the Crown Watch and Jewelry of Winnipeg.

Closed event, low gross, for the Dominion Sound trophy was won for the second year in a row by Ray Reaney, with Lou Miles in the runner-up position.

Closed low net for the Samuel Weiner trophy was won by Ray Reaney, with Harold Bishop coming in second.

Open low gross for the J. M. Rice trophy was won for the second year in a row by Walter Levin; runner-up Max Shelton.

Open low net for the Western Theatres trophy won by J. Zagoll; runner-up A. Winogratsky.

Jack Taylor received the prize for closest to the pin in the ninth hole, with George Dowbiggan taking the runner-up spot. Prizes were also awarded for the hidden high and low holes.

The committee in charge of the tournament included Harry W. Hurwitz, Chairman; R. D. Hurwitz, R. Reaney, H. Gray, H. Swartz, A. Feinstein, C. Krupp.

Charlie Krupp and R. D. Hurwitz were the official starters. Harry Hurwitz was chairman at the dinner and presentation of prizes.

Donations for the tournament were given by: R. D. Hurwitz, Main Street Pool, Odeon-Morton Theatres, Famous Players Corporation, Western Theatres Ltd., C. Krupp's Film Service, Crown Watch and Jewelry, J. M. Rice & Co., Dominion Sound Equipments Ltd., General Theatre Supply Co., S. Weiner.

MGM Signs Johnson

Hollywood: Van Johnson has been signed by M-G-M for the leading masculine role in "Pattern of Malice," which will be produced by Armand Deutsch from a story by Harry Junkin dealing with a scandal magazine and the consequences of its activities. The screen play has been written by Jerome Weidman.

Columbia To Release Prize French Film

New York: Marking a major step in its program of acquiring top international films for American distribution, Columbia Pictures has announced that it would release the 1956 Cannes International Film Festival Grand Prix Winner, "The Silent World," in the Western Hemisphere, Austral-Asia and the Far East, except Japan.

The much sought-after adventure film, recipient of The Golden Palm, the Cannes Festival's top award, was acquired by Columbia against heavy competitive bidding. France's most successful film production so far this year (critically and at the box office), "The Silent World" had in turn been launched by the renowned international best seller of the same name by Jacques-Yves Cousteau, a book which has been published in 27 countries and sold more than 4 million copies throughout the world, including almost two and a half million in the United States alone.

Filed in Eastman color by Jacques-Yves Cousteau, the world's most famous undersea explorer, and Louis Malle, his co-director, in the course of two cruises totaling 10 months and 50,000 miles in the Mediterranean, Red Sea, Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, "The Silent World" covers the exciting marine explorations of the Calypso Oceanographic Expeditions.

Jaro Filming New Monsarrat Novel

Toronto: Nicholas Monsarrat, the author of "The Cruel Sea" and other stories, who now lives in Canada, is leaving in a few weeks for England to watch the shooting of the first scenes of his "Story of Esther Costello" at the J. Arthur Rank studio.

CBU

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in the Council of Broadcasting Unions which has been organized at Toronto for radio and television technicians and performers. The council, which claims to represent 20,000 employees, is headed by Eldon Wilcox of the Association of Radio and TV Employees of Canada.

PARAMOUNT

(Continued from Page 1)

during a half-year period," the 10 productions are being offered to theatres at the time of Paramount's "Salute to George Weltner," 26-week sales drive in honor of the worldwide sales head's 34 years of active service to the firm.

While "War and Peace" and "The Ten Commandments," films of towering importance in the company's entire releasing history, will only enter the initial phase of their long-range distribution during the second half of 1956, the eight other pictures for all practical purposes will be released generally in the period.

In keeping with Paramount's announced policy for all its productions, the 10 new films have been made in VistaVision. Eight are in Technicolor and two were shot in black-and-white.

Paramount's general release schedule for July through December follows:

JULY — Panama-Frank's "That Certain Feeling," in Technicolor, starring Bob Hope, Eva Marie Saint and George Sanders, and Perlberg-Seaton's "The Proud and Profane," top-billing William Holden and Deborah Kerr.

AUGUST — Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis' "Pardners," in Technicolor.

SEPTEMBER — "The Vagabond King," in Technicolor, introducing Oreste co-starring with Kathryn Grayson, Rita Moreno and Sir Cedric Hardwicke, and "The Search for Bridey Murphy," starring Louis Hayward, Teresa Wright and Nancy Gates.

OCTOBER — Edward Dmytryk's "The Mountain," in Technicolor, starring Spencer Tracy, Robert Wagner and Claire Trevor.

NOVEMBER — "Three Violent People," in Technicolor, starring Charlton Heston, Anne Baxter, Gilbert Roland and Forrest Tucker.

DECEMBER — Hal Wallis' "Hollywood or Bust," in Technicolor, starring Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis with Anita Ekberg and Pat Crowley.

November will mark premieres of "The Ten Commandments" at a number of theatres including the University, Toronto. The Montreal engagement, at the Capitol Theatre, follows in December.

"War and Peace" viewed last week in London for the first time by top Paramount executives, is due to have its world premiere in August at the Capitol Theatre, New York, opening in Toronto at the Imperial, and in Montreal at Loew's, October 3rd.

Across the Country

Toronto

Prior to their scheduled appearance in the grandstand at the Canadian National Exhibition, the Three Deuces opened a three-day engagement July 9 on the stage of the Capitol Theatre, London, where W. K. Trudell is manager. The vocal trio, who played Toronto some weeks ago and have been signed by Columbia Pictures, comprise Paul Summerville of the Toronto Summervilles, Shane Rimmer and Barry Hamilton.

The Brockville Drive-In celebrated its fifth anniversary by presenting a variety of gifts and lucky prizes to all members of the family. There were free Pepsi-Cola drinks on the house and other treats for the juveniles including prizes in popcorn boxes. The anniversary program consisted of "Suddenly" and "Raiders of the Seven Seas."

The Avalon Theatre, a 762-seat house in Hamilton owned by H. W. and Harold Braden, has been closed for two weeks for a joint vacation of the whole staff. For many weeks the Avalon has been teamed with the Downtown Theatre, which is playing programs alone meanwhile. Last year the Lincoln Theatre at St. Catharines was closed for staff holidays.

Gene Autry was in and out of Toronto without making a personal appearance, the purpose of the visit being to check with Jack Arthur on program engagements and to inspect the big CNE grandstand. Announcement has been made that one of the headliners for the evening show will be Richard Hearne, the English comedian known as "Mr. Pastry," who has appeared on several Ed Sullivan TV programs.

Those who are inclined to scoff at the midnight horror stage shows, now making the rounds of Ontario, should be particularly interested in knowing that the combination performances at the Famous Players' Tivoli Theatre, Hamilton, and the Capitol Theatre, London, found it impossible to accommodate all the would-be patrons. There was such a crowd at the Hamilton house, with a persistent line-up outside, that a second show was immediately arranged long after midnight. One of the latest to get the "Scream Show" was the Famous Players' Regent at Brockville July 9.

Ottawa

The Star-Top Drive-In believes in the old adage — if you can't beat 'em, join 'em. The open-air theatre on Fisher Avenue is presenting "Little Monster Bingos" every Thursday night in conjunction with the South Ottawa Kiwanis Club, and attracting sizeable crowds. Bingo fans play the game while seated in their cars, with the numbers, as called, being heard over the car speakers. Checkers move rapidly between parked cars when the call of a winner is made by sounding his auto horn. Open-air bingos have been held in Ottawa and district before, but this is the first time the sessions have been held in a Drive-In theatre.

The Glebe Cinema is now operating under a new policy of two evening performances on Fridays and Saturdays, which manager Fred Leavens calls the "Curtain at 8.30" series. Matinee shows, aimed at the children, are presented Monday through Wednesday only. Plans in preparation for the new season starting in September include booking of stage shows in addition to special Hollywood, British and foreign-language films.

The Century Theatre has been sub-leased to an Italian couple, a man-and-wife team well known in the comparatively large Italian colony of the Capitol's West End district. The new operators are showing nightly programs of films produced in Italy to a fair measure of success.

Steve McManus, Odeon district manager, was a recent visitor to Ottawa for conference with Jimmy Chalmers, manager of the local Odeon Theatre. Steve, who was a most popular member of the Ottawa Theatre Managers' Association a few years back, took time out for a call on your Ottawa reporter at the Journal Bldg., accompanied by the genial Jimmy Chalmers.

Maritimes

Many friends about the Maritimes learned with sorrow last week of the death of Mrs. Lillian Golding, widow of Walter R. Golding. Mr. Golding was for many years manager of the Capitol Theatre in Saint John, N.B., and throughout his life connected with the Motion Picture Industry. Mr. Golding died in 1945. Mr. G. Eric Golding, manager of MGM Films in Saint John, is a son.

Mr. Duncan MacDonald, formerly manager of General Theatres Supply Company at Saint John, N.B., and now with the Toronto office of this company, is spending a holiday in New Brunswick, accompanied by Mrs. MacDonald.

Prairies

Rev. Robert Pearson, 77, who retired in 1945 from his post as Alberta's motion picture censor, died July 3 in Victoria, B.C. He was appointed in 1928 and during his 17 years as censor he viewed an estimated 35,000 films. He is survived by a daughter, four sisters and two brothers.

The city council of Medicine Hat, Alta., has endorsed a resolution of Calgary's city council recommending more stringent attempts by Alberta censors to prohibit showings of films glorifying the terror of teenage gangs. Only opposition came from Ald. Lloyd Craig, who said he was against censorship. He felt the job of disciplining and controlling teen-agers was the responsibility of parents.

Winnipeg

Morris Brown was honored by Film Industry associates at a stag on Tuesday, July 10th, prior to his being transferred to Calgary. Mr. Brown, who has been office manager of the Winnipeg Branch of United Artists will be salesman for the same Company out of Calgary.

Visitors to Winnipeg included Bud and Hussan Shibley, Radville, Sask., H. Jermoluk, Roblin, Man., N. Magnoski, Russell, Man.

Owner Dave Kaufman, manager Leo Mittleman, and the Citizen's Committee of the North Winnipeg Y.M.C.A. officiated at opening ceremonies on Wednesday, July 11th, inaugurating Wednesday Night BINGO at the North Main Drive-In, Winnipeg. Charge was \$2.00 per carload, and the prizes were awarded after each game, with a grand prize for the final game. Proceeds of Wednesday Night BINGO go to the North End Y.M.C.A.

Vancouver

A veteran Famous Players employee, Harry Brock, engineer at the Strand, died here this week at the age of 82. The wife of Dave Borland, Dominion Theatre manager, is hospitalized for treatments for which she has suffered for many years. The wife of Jack Reid, JARO manager, is in hospital for a check-up. Fred Wilson of the Strand is recuperating at his home after a spell in the hospital.

Film row visitors last week included Roy Porter, Salmar, Salmon Arm; Peter Abrosimoff of the Roxy, Grand Forks; Bill Smith of Woodfibre; Myron McLeod, Patricia, Powell River; Frank Soltice, Pines Drive-In, Penticton, and Doug Rosen, General Manager, IFD, Toronto.

A new theatre was opened recently at Stewart, B.C., a mining centre. Owner is Joe Ducklee.

Charlie Straw, old-time theatre manager of F-P houses in Winnipeg and Calgary, is holidaying on the Pacific Coast. Bob Harris of the Paradise is in Seattle, and Ivan Ackery, Orpheum manager, is on a fishing vacation on the Island.

Wally Hopp, manager of Famous Players' International-Cinema, and with the company for ten years, has resigned and will make his home in California. Clarence Palmquist, Hopp's assistant, has also resigned.

20TH-FOX

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start in its first engagements.

Following the musical drama starring Deborah Kerr and Yul Brynner, the company will open "Bigger Than Life," controversial drama of drug addiction, produced by and starring James Mason. Top-cast with Mason are Barbara Rush and Walter Mathau. The film, directed by Nicholas Ray, is based on an article in The New Yorker magazine by Berton Roueche.

August will see the premiere of "Bus Stop," starring Marilyn Monroe in her first screen appearance since "The Seven Year Itch." New-comer Don Murray is introduced in the Buddy Adler production based on the hit Broadway play by William Inge. Joshua Logan directed from a screen play by George Axelrod.

For Labor Day holiday engagements and playdates throughout September, 20th Century-Fox will offer "The Last Wagon," an epic Western drama starring Richard Widmark and co-starring Felicia Farr. William B. Hawks, who co-produced last year's hit "The Tall Men," is producer and Delmer Daves director of the film.

The fifth production on the slate is "The Best Things In Life Are Free," a lavishly-mounted musical drama starring Gordon MacRae, Sheree North, Dan Dailey and Academy Award winner Ernest Borgnine. Based on the celebrated careers of tunesmiths DeSilva, Brown & Henderson, the musical was produced by Henry Ephron and directed by Michael Curtiz.

At the same time he disclosed the expanded release schedule, Myers revealed that "The King And I," scheduled to open shortly at Shea's, Toronto, is ranking as 20th Century-Fox's biggest hit since "The Robe" in 1953, with a number of record-breaking grosses reported for the picture in its first engagements.

Wayne As Wayne

Hollywood: John Wayne will portray himself in RKO's "I Married A Woman," co-starring George Gobel and Diana Dors. Wayne will play Miss Dors' favorite movie star who endangers the marital happiness of George and Diana when they see him on the screen presenting his wife with a \$10,000 gift. For plot purposes, Wayne will be photographed in color, with the rest of the film being shot in black and white.

"I Married A Woman" went before the cameras this week with William Bloom producing and Hal Kanter directing.

"TRAPEZE"

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Earned film rental for the first week of the multiple dates of the United Artists release set another all-time industry record with a total of \$2,385,250.

In another demonstration of its unmatched boxoffice power, "Trapeze" registered 336 holdovers among the 405 dates, for 84 per cent extended playing time. The CinemaScope circus thriller was moved over in 17 additional situations.

The record-setting dates, establishing the greatest first-week returns in the history of motion pictures, were launched from June 28 through July 3. The grosses and film rentals do not include receipts from the pre-release engagements in Chicago, Los Angeles and New York.

In setting the new world's gross mark, "Trapeze" also rolled up an avalanche of theatre records across the country for opening-day, week-end and full-week grosses.

"Oklahoma" Continues At 2 Canadian Houses

Toronto: "Oklahoma," the Todd-AO production starring Shirley Jones and Gordon MacRae, is in its 12th week at Famous Players' Tivoli Theatre here, and in its second month at the Allouette in Montreal. Word from Famous Players head-office is that the picture is holding up exceptionally well in Toronto, but is off a bit in Montreal.

Oshawa Council Heeds Theatres' Tax Plea

Oshawa: The exhibitors at Oshawa, Ont., sparked by Jack Weiser of the Plaza Theatre, and Leon "Pop" Osier of the Biltmore Theatre, have gained a concession from the Oshawa City Council in the substantial reduction of the municipal license tax. Brief presented by the local theatre managers pointed out that the tax, at the rate of 25 cents per seat, was unfair, and unreasonably high, in view of the fact that public halls are only liable for an annual fee of \$5, dance halls \$10, and roller rinks \$25. Editorial support for the exhibitors' brief was given by the Oshawa Daily Times-Gazette, and as a result of the exhibitors' petition, the tax has been reduced to a flat \$50 per year.

Savings for the four theatres involved includes \$125 for the Biltmore, approximately \$120 for the Marks, \$115 for the Plaza, and close to \$200 for the Regent.

CENSORSHIP

(Continued from Page 1)

calling for stricter censorship of so-called teen-age gang films.

"We feel that Ald. Clarence Mack (sponsor of the resolution) has been hasty in his judgment as the only censored films to be seen by the public are those shown in motion picture theatres. Films shown on TV are not subject to censorship.

"Each province has its own board of censors and the Alberta board, under the chairmanship of Col. P. J. Fleming, chief censor, is recognized nationally as the most discriminating in Canada.

"And the Alberta Theatre Association has endorsed his policy and is trying to comply in every detail with the provincial regulations governing youth attendance at theatre performances.

"We would appreciate it if Ald. Mack would be more specific and name the films and the theatres that are the offenders. We would welcome that information.

"To place the blame for teen-age gangsterism in Calgary on theatre, radio, TV or comic books would seem to be grabbing at a straw on the part of Ald. Mack. The real challenge is to the home and a deeper appreciation of the whole problem of youth today."

TAX CUT

(Continued from Page 1)

Herschorn, Fred Gregor, A. J. Mason, Malcolm Walker, Peter Bianski, and F. Gordon Spencer, representing the members of the N.S. Exhibitors' Association, met with Premier Hicks of Nova Scotia, to add to, and further substantiate the Brief. Apparently their efforts were well received, as the Government this week announced a new scale of Amusement Taxes as follows:

No tax up to 30c.

2 cents up to 38c.

5 cents up to 71c.

While this represents some slight relief in the Amusement Tax, it is doubtful if it will be sufficient to save theatres which are operating heavily in the red. Just this week, Malcolm Walker, one of the members of the N.S. Exhibitors' Association, was forced to close down three of his theatres, the Gaiety, Halifax; the Kent, Spryfield, and the Roxy, Shubenacadie.

Also reported closed this week was the Royal, Borden, P.E.I., owned and operated by J. K. Pidgeon. A number of other theatres in the Maritimes are reported on the verge of closing down, while still others are operating only two or three days per week.

WARNERS

(Continued from Page 1)

elected president, succeeding his brother, Harry M. Warner. The new president retains substantial holdings in the company which he and his brothers founded.

Harry M. and Albert Warner will continue on the board of directors, to which Semenenko, Allen and Benjamin Kalmenson have been elected. The other members of the board remain the same.

It also was announced that Kalmenson will be executive vice-president of the parent company. He previously was vice-president in charge of distribution and president of Warner Bros. Picture Distributing Corp.

In assuming the presidency, Jack L. Warner announced that all of the world-wide facilities of Warner Bros. and its subsidiaries will be "directed more vigorously through the acquisition of the most important story properties, talent, and to the production of the finest motion pictures possible."

"Our sole purpose," Mr. Warner stated, "is to work wholeheartedly toward the providing of a constant supply of important and challenging motion picture product, for the United States and for the world markets. By producing motion pictures of merit, we not only are assuring the exhibitors of a continuous flow of product for their theatres, but we also are reaffirming our faith in the motion picture industry generally and in our company specifically.

"We intend to go forward with absolute confidence in the future of this business and in the great contribution which we know Warner Bros. Pictures will make towards that goal. The exhibitors and the public can confidently expect that Warner Bros. Pictures will spare no effort to develop a continuous program of quality motion pictures," Warner said.

The newly elected president, highly optimistic for his company and the industry's future, stated that, "I am very happy that my brothers, the board of directors and the distinguished financial group have placed under my direction the perpetuation of the company which our family has pioneered. On behalf of my brothers and myself, I want to thank our employees and stockholders, as well as our friends and associates everywhere, who have shown their loyalty and devotion to the company throughout the years. I want to assure them that we — and this means they — are in business more confidently and more proudly than ever before."